

The Liverpool Institute for Performing Arts Access agreement for 2011/2012

Context

The Liverpool Institute for Performing Arts (LIPA) was founded in 1995. We began as a private higher education institute and were designated on 1st August 2006.

In the academic year 2009/10, there were around 524 HEFCE-funded students and a further 110 international students on undergraduate degree programmes.

Admissions to the higher education degree programmes of the teaching portfolio is based on the candidate's ability in their chosen programme, together with educational attainment, experience, interdisciplinary experience/interest, communication skills and enterprise.

These are assessed using the candidate's application forms and audition/interview events. This is carefully explained in our prospectus and on the website.

A large number of students apply to our courses for a small amount of places. We also invite a high proportion of applicants to audition/interview events held at LIPA. In 2009 we held around 53 audition/interview events and saw roughly 2820 students here. The following table for 2009 entry to our programmes through UCAS for UK students demonstrates the levels of applications and numbers of acceptances:

Course	Applications	Acceptances
BA Acting (Performing Arts)	2023	24
BA Community Drama	94	18
BA Dance (Performing Arts)	814	16
BA Music	406	23
BA Music (Performing Arts)	348	13
BA Music, Theatre and Entertainment Management	163	25
BA Sound Technology	359	22
BA Theatre and Performance Design (Route B)	39	5
BA Theatre and Performance Design (Route A)	69	8
BA Theatre and Performance Technology	130	20
Total	4445	174

Fee policy

Performing arts training is resource intensive and expensive. To maintain and develop the quality of provision, particularly the student learning experience, we took the decision to charge UK/EU students the maximum fee for our full-time undergraduate programmes from 2006/07 onwards. In 2010/11 this was £3,290 and we will be charging £3,375 in 2011/12.

Bursaries

We want students to participate in higher education, regardless of financial circumstances. In order to achieve this we introduced a new bursary scheme in 2006.

A student in receipt of the full Higher Education Maintenance Grant/Special Support Grant would be eligible for a full LIPA bursary. In 2011/12, this means a student receiving a full maintenance grant of £2,906 would be eligible for a full bursary of £564.

For 2011 entry, students in receipt of a partial Higher Education Maintenance Grant/Special Support Grant greater than £1,106 would be eligible for a bursary of £282.

Our bursaries will be paid via the Banking Automated Clearing System (BACS) direct to the student's nominated bank account or by cheque. Eligible students will receive the bursary in February after their attendance is confirmed through the Higher Education Early Statistics (HESES) census data and the attendance confirmation report to the Student Loan Company.

Other financial support and advice

We recognise that many students will be interested in finding part-time employment to help support themselves. We have a number of paid casual work opportunities for students, which are well promoted throughout the year (in compliance with our Equal Opportunities Policy) and our students can find out about other employment opportunities through Liverpool John Moores University Students Union.

We also buy in welfare services from Liverpool John Moores University, such as specialist advice on budgeting for students.

Provision of information for students

We provide information on financial support in our prospectus and on our website. This topic is also covered in the welcome and overview talk to prospective students and their parents or teachers at open day events and can be provided to all school parties who visit us.

All students who are offered and accept a place receive comprehensive information from us about financial support, including guidance on applying for funding from the Student Loan Company. All returning students are also sent up-to-date financial advice in the lead up to enrolment each year.

During enrolment, students evidence their entitlement to bursary support via their Financial Notification information. In cases when students have not provided that at enrolment, the finance department sends a number of emails encouraging students to provide this documentation.

WP strategy and outreach from 2008-2011

Our WP Strategy covers 2008/09, 2009/2010 and 2010/2011. It aims to develop long-term, intensive projects, which develop talented young people from disadvantaged backgrounds, whilst supporting and developing the quality of teaching of performing arts in schools and colleges.

The strategy also identified ways to substantially increase the range and number of activities that we were already providing for inbound and outbound groups.

In the three years of delivering the widening participation strategy, the following outreach activities have been delivered:

- We have a progression programme, which operates regularly in up to twelve local schools. The age ranges of the young people we work with and the activities we deliver are customised to each school. Typically, we reach over 50 students in each school who have both demonstrated some talent in performing arts/creative subjects and are from disadvantaged backgrounds. The emphasis is on working with the young people on a regular basis. The aims are to help them build on their skills in performing arts and making performance possible subjects and to help to raise their aspirations to go on to study at the higher education level.
- We have delivered two residential summer schools for 50 year 9 students with match funding from HEFCE. The first was held in summer 2009 and the second in summer 2010. The summer schools lasted 4 nights and 5 days and culminated in a performance at LIPA. The demand for places on the summer school has been high and the retention rate has been 100%, with very positive feedback from the participants about their experiences on the summer school.
- We have delivered two residential summer schools for 50 year 10 students with full funding from Aimhigher. The first was held in summer 2009 and the second in summer 2010. These summer schools lasted 3 nights and 4 days and culminated in a showcase performance at LIPA. Again, the demand for places on the summer schools has been high and the retention rate has been 100%, with very positive feedback from the participants about their experiences on the summer school. We have funding from Aimhigher to run one further summer school in the summer of 2011.
- We have hosted the Aimhigher ‘Include Us’ disabled students project each summer for the last 4 years, which gives 60 young disabled people the opportunity to work with our practitioners to produce a show in a week.
- In July 2009, we launched a pilot “Undiscovered” project, with an organisation called SALT, which works with young people who are at risk of exclusion from school or offending. We have built on the project and continued with it throughout 2009/2010 and into 2010/11 whereby our practitioners work at their centre several hours a week using performing arts to help encourage the young people to re-engage in education.
- In February 2010, we delivered a week of intensive skills development workshops for young people in year 10 who are gifted in performing arts and interested in taking further study after year 11. The Gifted and Talented Hub (North West) funded this in part.
- We have delivered three further weeks of intensive skills development workshops for young people in year 12 and 13 who are gifted in performing arts and interested in applying for higher education courses in the future. These have also received funding from the Gifted and Talented Hub (North West) to varying degrees.

- In Spring 2010, we launched a new programme of skills development workshops for teachers in primary and secondary schools. In addition to helping them understand how performing arts is taught at university, the training programme also focused on helping them develop their teaching-style using performing arts techniques. These also offered opportunities for networking and sharing good practice and ideas.
- In 2009, we worked with 10 primary school groups to develop their awareness of performing arts and university study.
- We have maintained and, where possible, increased the range of inbound and outbound activities that we offer to school and college groups, outside of those who take part in our progression or partnership programmes. Many of the inbound activities are based around our public performances, whereby we offer complimentary or reduced price tickets to selected performances for targeted widening participation groups. We also attend a variety of schools and colleges fairs that have large groups of students from disadvantaged backgrounds.
- For the last four years, we have participated in an annual year 10 conference with Aimhigher at Liverpool Hope University to help raise the profile of LIPA courses with a wide range of Aimhigher students.
- We have developed a choreography competition with Aimhigher and local schools which is due to take place in December 2010.
- We have developed a regular boy's dance group in a local school to encourage more boys to consider undertaking dance at Higher Education level.
- We have been working with the European Union to develop a NEETS project called "Undiscovered Plus", which uses performing arts training with groups of participants who are not in education, employment or training to encourage them to go back into education or employment.
- We have been working with two to three local FE colleges as part of our partnership programme. This includes delivering workshops and highlighting progression options into HE.
- We are part of the Rainhill Learning Village Trust in St Helens, with Rainhill High School and St Helens College and provide specialist advice, guidance and workshops to the trust. We are also involved in the Governance at the school and LIPA representatives sit on trust boards.
- Our WP Manager is involved in the Governing Boards of two local schools and advises on the board of trustees at a Trust School in Walsall.
- In 2010 we undertook a pilot survey of people who had declined to attend auditions/interviews at LIPA to help identify any potential barriers to LIPA. We are in the process of undertaking a second survey and will be reviewing the results of these to help inform future wp strategy.

WP activities in 2011/2012

We are anticipating reductions in funding in 2011/2012 from Aimhigher, HEFCE match-funded summer schools and the Gifted and Talented Hub scheme. This means that we are currently planning to reduce our activities in 2011/12. The institution will be reviewing its overall strategy and WP strategy for the next three years, taking into consideration the recommendations to be announced in the Government White Paper in winter 2010. This will provide detailed proposals on the wider, long-term issues that arise from Lord Browne's review: "Securing a sustainable future for Higher Education". Chaired by Lord Browne (October 2010). This means it would be premature to outline WP outreach activities and WP indicators for 2012/13 onwards.

For 2011/2012 we have planned the following WP activities:

- We will continue to develop and deliver the progression programme, which is operating in nine local schools and reaches over 50 students in each school. The contact time may be reduced from 30 hours per year with each school to 15 hours per year.
- We will continue to deliver week-long intensive skills development workshops for young people in year 12/13 who are gifted in performing arts and interested in applying for higher education courses in the future.
- We will continue to work with at least three local primary school groups to develop their awareness of performing arts and university.
- We will continue to offer complimentary or reduced price tickets to selected performances for targeted widening participation groups.
- We will continue to be involved in the Rainhill Learning Village Trust and the other Governing bodies at local schools.
- We will continue to explore if there are any barriers to LIPA through a range of detailed research projects, including further research into why students do not take up the offer of an audition or a place. This research will help to inform our future WP Strategy.

We hope to be able to develop further outreach activity in addition to the activities described above, although this depends on financial circumstances. We are currently exploring the possibility of future European funding for the NEETS project, gifted and talented North West funding and other EU funding streams.

Milestones and performance indicators

The objective of our widening participation strategy is to reach out to students from under-represented groups, who have the talent and ability to apply to LIPA. Our milestones for 2011 reflect the groups below:

- young first-degree entrants from low participation neighbourhoods (POLAR2)*

- students who identify as disabled
- students from Black and Minority Ethnic groups

*we also collect NS-SEC data from all the students involved in WP projects, but do not use this as a performance indicator because of the gaps in data from UCAS, of up to 30% unknowns

We also target the following groups as part of our WP Strategy

- mature students from low-participation neighbourhoods
- students leaving the local care system

Our performance indicators are based on UCAS data on applications and accepts. Given the long-term impact of widening participation work, we have always aimed for an average target increase of 3% over a three-year period in setting performance indicators for the young first degree-entrants from low participation neighbourhoods.

Performance indicators for 2010/11 and 2011/12

1 Young first-degree entrants from low participation neighbourhoods (POLAR2)

	Actual (2007/8)	Actual (2008/9)	Actual (2009/10)	Estimated (2010/11)	Target PI Year 1 (2011/12)
Applications from low participation neighbourhoods (sectors 1 and 2)	28.30%	29.35%	30.37%	31%	32%
Acceptances from low participation neighbourhoods (sectors 1 and 2) *	23.76%	23.67%	20.69%	21%	22%

*in each year for acceptances, there has been between 13% and 17% unknown data for POLAR2 acceptances. Applications is less than 5% unknowns so is reliable data.

2 Students who identify as Disabled

	Actual (2007/8)	Actual (2008/9)	Actual (2009/10)	Estimated (2010/11)	Target PI Year 1 (2011/12)
Applications from disabled students	7.33%	6.97%	7.15%	7.5%	8%
Acceptances from disabled students	9.41%	6.28%	6.32%	6.5%	7%

3 Students from Black and Minority Ethnic groups

	Actual (2007/8)	Actual (2008/9)	Actual (2009/10)	Estimated (2010/11)	Target PI Year 1 (2011/12)
Applications from BME students *	7.46%	7.74%	7.54%	7.5%	8%
Acceptances from BME students *	5.45%	4.35%	9.20%	9%	8%#

* unknown data for ethnicity is around 6% for applications and around 16% for acceptances each year

#we have set a target of 8% accepts for 2011/12 because we are unable to determine whether the peak in 2009/10 was unusual or whether it is an ongoing trend as we do not yet have the data for 2010/11, we will review this PI for 2012/13 once we have a trend

We purchase data each year from UCAS to enable us to monitor whether we are reaching our targets for these key performance indicators.

Milestones and monitoring outreach:

In 2009/10 we reached a large number of students, this was due in part to projects which were externally funded. As this funding is likely to be discontinued in 2011/12, we have reduced our target number of activities and participants for 2011/12.

	Actual (2009/10)	Estimate (2010/11)	Target Year 1 (2011/12)
Total number of widening participation activities	62	60	50
Number of new participants to benefit	4480	4000	3000

Monitoring and Evaluation

We keep a monitoring record of all the activities, which have taken place, which includes the number of students, number of new students reached, socioeconomic backgrounds, ethnicity, gender and disability. This helps us to monitor who we are reaching on a regular basis and also ensures that we are not double accounting students who we work with regularly.

We also evaluate of all our activities, predominately through questionnaires. Reports are then drawn up about each project, evaluating effectiveness. We believe that just one intervention is not always the trigger to a student wanting to go to University; therefore, we are developing case studies of students on our progression programme and our NEETS project, to track their progress, and demonstrate how the programme has impacted on them. We intend to include statements from tutors and to track whether they do progress on to Higher Education courses in the future.

We will also report in our WP Strategic Assessment the progress we have made towards the milestones and key performance indicators.

Institutional Monitoring Arrangements

The Widening Participation Manager oversees the implementation of projects identified in the widening participation strategy and action plan with the support of the Equality and Diversity Committee and reports to the LIPA Directorate.

LIPA's Directorate is responsible for providing leadership on the monitoring, evaluation and strategic development of the widening participation strategy and progress against our milestones set out in our Access Agreement.

The corporate responsibility for ensuring the success of the strategy rests with LIPA Council.